

2018 PSWD Elementary/Family Winter

General Information

This packet contains information and, in some cases, links to information, on how to get to camp and what to bring along. Even if you're a seasoned winter driver, please read the information on travel to camp at this time of year. The included permission and release forms must be completed before Check-in. And your balance must be paid in full before you arrive, as camp staff does not have the ability to process any payments on the spot.

Please take a moment, sooner rather than later, to complete the on-line Camper Profile. This will help the camp coordinators ensure that every camper has a full and rich camp experience. [Click here to go to the Camper Profile form.](#)

Arrival and Check-In

Registration starts on Saturday at 12:30 PM sharp. Be sure to arrive promptly; our weekend together already goes so quickly, and we don't want you to miss anything! Once registration closes at 2:00 PM, camp will begin right away. Our first meal together is dinner, so please have lunch on your way to camp. There will be some light snacks out in the lodge during check-in but not a substantial meal. We have included a general overview of a day at camp in this packet to give you an idea of how this camp works. We'll provide a more detailed schedule at check-in.

Packing Particulars

Not knowing what the weather may bring, it is best to be prepared with warm bedding and clothing, including waterproof boots, hats, and mittens or gloves (see attached list). Staying dry is the way to stay warm: wool and synthetics dry more quickly than cotton, and waterproof outerwear is crucial for snow play. For you frequent campers, remember when packing that the wash house will be closed for the winter due to the potential for frozen pipes. Children may not be allowed to participate in outdoor activities without proper attire, so please pack extras, particularly socks. I suggest a minimum of six pairs, as wet feet put a wet blanket on snow play. If the sled run is open, helmets are required for sledding: no exceptions. Please send your child with a bike helmet. Likewise, if your family has a favorite sled, consider bringing it up. Camp does have a few, but more are... well, more!

To avoid contributing to camp's lost-and-found box, please label all items with your name. You might also bring outgrown gear to share. For many of us, outfitting everyone for one weekend a year is a challenge. Your "something extra" may be just what a cold, wet child needs after an afternoon on the sled run.

Other items to bring include a nightlight for your cabin, and lip balm, lotion and sunscreen to protect skin from the cold and glare. **Also, don't forget chains for your car.** These are a must: the state of California requires that all travelers carry them in winter.

Special Diets

Our de Benneville kitchen staff works hard to provide a hearty menu that appeals to most children and keeps them energized through their hours of active play at camp. The kitchen also provides a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables for wholesome eaters. If someone in your family is vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, or has a serious food allergy, and you did not indicate this on your registration, please send a note to registrar@uucamp.org so the kitchen can make enough special foods for everyone who needs them. You also may bring (or send with your child) any special foods you may need. There are no grocery stores in the wilderness, which can make handling “food emergencies” difficult. Families have had success bringing a small cooler labeled with their name to keep in the lodge; a microwave is available. Because of animals, no food is allowed in cabins. Like all Pacific Southwest District camps which involve youth at camp without their parents, Elementary/Family Winter Camp is smoke and alcohol-free. This district policy keeps our youth safe, so please leave these items at home. Thank you!

Variety Hour

Sunday night’s Camper Variety Hour offers you a safe, inclusive opportunity to share your songs, skits, jokes, dance moves, silly human tricks, etc. We encourage all adults and children alike to take part. As you pack, think about what you’d like to share. Maybe your whole family can perform together? Perhaps you can recruit your cabin-mates for a silly skit? Bring your instruments, props and costume items, and be ready to sign up at camp. We look forward to cheering you on!

Camp Structure

Why is there that slash in Elementary/Family Winter Camp? It’s really two camps taking place at once. The “elementary” portion has young campers in cabins with trained counseling staff, and the “family” portion has other young campers in cabins with their parents. Our staff works hard to engage new and seasoned campers alike with outdoor activities, indoor games, meaningful worship and feel-good music. But none of it would be possible without YOU.

At camp, parents play an active role. Parent participation creates the cooperative feel that makes this experience so special. Adults at camp support the community by signing up for one workshop per day as a helper. Some options include the sled run, outdoor play, indoor activities like theater games, and lodge time. Please think about how you would like to participate and be ready to sign up when you arrive. You will find this a great way to get to know other campers and a meaningful contribution to others’ experiences. Marianne Swift-Gifford, our Parent Coordinator, will be contacting you soon (if she hasn’t already) to help get things started. By working together, we foster independence for our young people, nurture lifelong UU campers, and make our time together enjoyable for all.